

## Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-03 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00

NSC-05 BIB-01 /088 W

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P R 171901Z APR 75

FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0964

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0195

NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET REPS ON  
APRIL 16, 1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON APRIL 16, US REP AND DEPREP HAD A DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET REPS KHLESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY AT INITIATIVE OF SOVIETS. STRESSING THAT HE WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY AND WITHOUT ANY COMMITMENT, KHLESTOV MADE SEVERAL PROPOSALS TO ADVANCE THE VIENNA TROOP REDUCTION NEGOTIATIONS WHICH, WHILE NOT FOCUSSED ON THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF REDUCTIONS, NONETHELESS APPEARED TO DEMONSTRATE A DESIRE OF THE SOVIETS, OR AT LEAST OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION AT ITS LEVEL, TO GET THE NEGOTIATIONS MOVING.

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IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT, ALTHOUGH SOVIET REP KHLESTOV WENT

FURTHER IN THIS BILATERAL CONVERSATION THAN HE HAS WITH OTHER WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES, HIS REMARKS WERE NOT ISOLATED ONES, BUT APPEAR TO FORM PART OF A CONCERTED EFFORT BY EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES IN RECENT WEEKS TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF A DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARD COMPROMISE ON SOME OPEN ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. AT THE OUTSET OF THE APRIL 16 DISCUSSION, KHLESTOV SAID HE WISHED ON AN INFORMAL AND PERSONAL BASIS WITHOUT ANY COMMITMENT WHATEVER TO POSE SEVERAL QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO SEE IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MOVE THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. DEPENDING ON THE US REP'S RESPONSE, HE MIGHT TAKE UP THESE ISSUES IN MOSCOW. KHLESTOV SAID HIS FIRST POINT WAS BASED ON THE FACT THAT WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAD RECENTLY APPEARED TO PLACE GREAT STRESS RECENTLY ON THEIR OPPOSITION TO INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL CEILINGS. HE ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONSIDER A SOLUTION WHEREBY THE EAST DROPPED ITS REQUIREMENT FOR NATIONAL CEILINGS AND THE WEST IN RETURN AGREED TO FEDERAL GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN A FIRST REDUCTION AGREEMENT. US REP REPLIED THAT THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AT THIS POINT WAS EASTERN WILLINGNESS TO TAKE SIGNIFICANT PHASE I REDUCTIONS AND TO MAKE A COMMITMENT TO THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT. THE ISSUE OF RESIDUAL CEILINGS WOULD ONLY BECOME A PRACTICAL ISSUE AFTER AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS.

3. KHLESTOV THEN ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONSIDER A FIRST PHASE LIMITED TO US AND SOVIET FORCES ON AN EQUAL NUMBER BASIS, PERHAPS 20,000 ON EACH SIDE. US REP REPLIED THAT THIS WOULDNOT BE ACCEPTABLE. THE ALLIES HAD MADE GREAT EFFORTS DURING THE PAST ROUND TO INDICATE WHY IT WAS JUSTIFIED FOR THE WEST TO REQUIRE LARGER SOVIET REDUCTIONS.

4. SMIRNOVSKY SAID HE HAD A POINT TO MAKE. THE ALLIES OPPOSED NATIONAL CEILINGS, YET THEY WISHED TO IMPOSE A NATIONAL CEILING ON SOVIET FORCES IN A PHASE I AGREEMENT. THE MATTER SHOULD GO ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. SMIRNOVSKY THEN ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONTEMPLATE AN OVERALL COLLECTIVE CEILING FOR THE FORCES ON EACH SIDE

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WITHOUT A SEPARATE CEILING ON US AND SOVIET FORCES. SMIRNOVSKY SAID THE USSR WOULD NOT WANT TO INCREASE ITS FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA FOLLOWING NEGOTIATED WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES, BUT WANTED TO BE IN A POSITION TO DO SO IF THE FRG SHOULD INCREASE ITS FORCES. (COMMENT: IT WAS NOT CLEAR FROM THIS LAST REMARK WHETHER SMIRNOVSKY INTENDED IT AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PREVIOUS SUGGESTION OR AS A SEPARATE IDEA. END

COMMENT). US REP SAID, IF REAL STABILITY WAS TO COME TO CENTRAL EUROPE, US AND SOVIET FORCES WOULD HAVE TO BE LIMITED, BUT, ONCE AGAIN, THE SOVIETS WERE ADDRESSING ISSUES WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE TACKLED AFTER AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS. THEY SHOULD ADDRESS ALLIED ARGUMENTS ON THIS POINT.

5. KHLESTOV THEN SAID THERE MIGHT BE OTHER WAYS OF DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL CEILINGS. HE ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ENVISAGE SOME COMPROMISE FORMULA WHICH MIGHT LIMIT GERMAN CAPACITY TO EXPAND THEIR FORCES, SUCH AS THAT THE GERMANS EXPANRHEIR FORCES BY MAI THAN A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE, SAY 50 PERCENT, OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ALLIED REDUCTIONS. US REP SAID THAT IT WAS GOOD THAT THE SOVIETS WERE MOVING AWAY FROM THE IDEA OF NATIONAL CEILINGS, BUT, ONCE AGAIN, THE CENTRAL ISSUE WAS THE NUMBER OF REDUCTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY BOTH SIDES.

6. KHLESTOV THEN REFERRED TO ALLIED PROPOSALS TO REACH AN AGREED DEFINITION OF GROUND FORCES AND TO DISCUSS DATA. HE ASKED WHAT THE ALLIES WOULD GIVE TO THE EAST IN RETURN IF THE EAST AGREED TO ENGAGE IN SUCH A DISCUSSION. US REP SAID THAT, FOR THE ALLIES, THIS WAS NOT A TRADING OBJECT. DISCUSSION OF THESE ITEMS WOULD BE IN THE MUTUAL INTEREST OF BOTH SIDES. US REP RECALLED WESTERN OFFER TO ADJUST ITS FIGURES IF PROVED INCORRECT BY OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE.

7. IN THE ENSUING DISCUSSION, US REP POINTED OUT THAT EVEN UNDER THE SOVIET PROPOSAL THERE WOULD

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P R 171901Z APR 75  
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0965  
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INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY  
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FROM US REP MBFR

HAVE TO BE SOME DEFINITION OF GROUND FORCES. KHLESTOV SAID THE EAST HAD NOT ORIGINALLY CONTEMPLATED SETTING RESIDUAL LEVELS IN NUMERICAL TERMS IN AN AGREEMENT, BUT THIS WAS SOMETHING WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED. IN ANY EVENT, THE EAST WOULD ENVISAGE A SINGLE GLOBAL LIMITATION FOR ALL GROUND AND AIR FORCES ON EACH SIDE. US REP POINTED OUT THAT THIS COULD PERMIT SOVIETS TO CONVERT ALL THEIR FORCES IN THE AREA TO GROUND FORCES, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THEIR GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY TO STATION AIR FORCES IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE USSR. SMIRNOVSKY AND KHLESTOV APPEARED TO AGREE THERE MIGHT BE OBJECTIVE REASONS TO LIMIT THIS FREEDOM IN SOME WAY AND THAT A DEFINITION OF GROUND FORCES MIGHT HAVE VALUE. KHLESTOV DID NOT REVERT TO THE IDEA OF COMPENSATION BUT  
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ALSO DID NOT STATE THE SOVIETS WOULD PROCEED WITH DATA DISCUSSION.

8. KHLESTOV SAID HE WANTED TO ASK A NON-DIPLOMATIC QUESTION. WHEN WAS THE WEST GOING TO MAKE A PROPOSAL ON TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS? US REP SAID THE ALLIES HAD MADE NO DECISION TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION ON THIS TOPIC.

9. KHLESTOV THEN SUGGESTED THAT CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO A FIRST AGREEMENT IN WHICH TWO TO THREE PERCENT OF ALL FORCES ON EACH SIDE WOULD BE REDUCED, BUT THE US AND USSR WOULD TAKE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REDUCTIONS FOR EACH SIDE. US REP POINTED OUT THAT THIS APPROACH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF CONTRACTUALIZING THE PRESENT EAST-WEST GROUND FORCE RELATIONSHIP. HE URGED SOVIET REPS TO GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO ALLIED REASONS FOR REQUIRING ASYMMETRICAL EASTERN REDUCTIONS AND SAID THAT THIS WAS THE ESSENTIAL ISSUE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

WITHOUT SOVIET MOVEMENT ON THIS POINT, HE COULD NOT SEE HOW A REDUCTION AGREEMENT COULD BE ACHIEVED.

10. TO THIS, SMIRNOVSKY COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE ASYMMETRICAL EASTERN REDUCTIONS AS LONG AS THE WEST RESTRICTED REDUCTIONS TO GROUND FORCES ALONE. ALL FORCES IN THE AREA MUST BE INCLUDED IN REDUCTIONS. KHLESTOV AGREED, BUT NEITHER MADE SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO INDICATE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS.

11. BEGIN COMMENT: ON APRIL 17 US REP BRIEFED THE AD HOC GROUP ON THE POINTS CONTAINED IN THIS DISCUSSION WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PARAS 3, 4, 7 AND 9 ABOVE.

12. IN THE PAST TWO TO THREE WEEKS, SOVIET, POLISH AND CZECHOSLOVAK DELEGATIONS (BUT NOT THE EAST GERMANS) HAVE WITH VARYING DEGREES OF SPECIFICITY INDICATED READINESS: (A) TO DISCUSS RELINQUISHMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL CEILINGS IN FAVOR OF SOME COMPROMISE FORMULATION; (B) TO RESUME DISCUSSION OF AN AGREED GROUND FORCE DEFINITION; AND (C) TO BEGIN DISCUSSION OF DATA ON A BASIS OF EXCHANGE. (SEE SEPTTEL FOR COVERAGE OF LATTER TWO POINTS). MANY OF  
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THESE PROPOSALS HAVE SUGGESTED IN RETURN SOME FORM OF GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN PHASE I REDUCTIONS. IN ADDITION, KHLESTOV, BUT NOT THE EAST EUROPEANS, HAS SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A US-SOVIET FIRST PHASE IN TWO VERSIONS AND ALSO A FIRST PHASE LIMITED TO STATIONED FORCES. SEVERAL POLISH AND CZECH DELEGATES AND SOVIET MILITARY REP KAPITONOV HAVE SUGGESTED THERE SHOULD BE REDUCTION OF EASTERN TANKS AGAINST WESTERN TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE CZECHOSLOVAK REP HAS SAID IN ADDITION THAT EASTERN MANPOWER REDUCTIONS COULD BE ASYMMETRICAL. THE POLES HAVE ALSO SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF ASYMMETRICAL FIRST PHASE REDUCTIONS IF THERE WERE FEDERAL GERMAN PARTICIPATION.

13. WITH MINOR EXCEPTIONS, THESE EASTERN INITIATIVES ARE THE FIRST OF THIS TYPE SINCE A NUMBER OF INFORMAL PROPOSALS MADE IN MARCH- APRIL A YEAR AGO, AND THEY GO BEYOND PROPOSALS MADE THEN. IT IS SIGNIFIANT THAT THESE SUGGESTIONS HAVE INVOLVED NO INDICATION OF SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO MAKE SIGNIFICANTLY ASYMMETRICAL EASTERN MANPOWER REDUCTIONS, ALTHOUGH SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVES HAVE IMPLIED THAT THE EAST HAS A LARGER TOTAL FORCE AND THEREFORE WOULD REDUCE MORE EVEN IF ITS OWN PROPOSALS WERE FOLLOWED. HENCE, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO REAL INDICATION OF GIVE ON THE CENTRAL

ISSUE OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS, A SERIES OF EASTERN  
SIGNALS ON LESS CENTRAL ISSUES DO APPEAR TO  
PROVIDE EVIDENCE, LACKING OVER THE PAST YEAR, OF A  
DESIRE TO MAKE COMPROMISES WHICH COULD MOVE THE VIENNA  
NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. END COMMENT. RESOR

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